

NO MORE BOWERY THRILLS FOR SIGHTSEERS

The Once Famous Thoroughfare So Tame That Rubber Neck Wagons Have Ceased to Make Their Nightly Trips Thither

Even that thrill of anticipated adventure which the young honeymooners and other visitors to Manhattan from Nanticoke, Pa., or Hellangone, Kan., have been experiencing at night on the bad, bad, Bowery in recent years as they climbed down from what the Bowery calls the "right seeing hay wagons" to visit "dens of vice" under the guidance of the man with the lungs and megaphone is an ancient history now—maybe for all time. The nightly sightseeing trips of the lumbering gasolene "hay wagons" have been discontinued largely because the force of making visitors believe while cruising through a very safe neighborhood that all about them are crime and criminals and sudden death has become so great a strain even upon the imaginative sightseeing guides that they've decided to ring down the curtain on what the Bowery calls "the bunk."

"I see the Bowery begin," the Hon. Chuck Connors sighed reminiscently a few nights ago, "and I see it end."

Nevertheless with Steve Brodie's no more, old McGurk's "Suicide Hall" occupied by a respectable restaurant, a drug store where once was the back room of the New England Hotel of odorous memory, Nigger Mike but a memory, Tony Kelly, Mike's successor, running a saloon in further Brooklyn—even with these sightseeing headline attractions pushed aside to give place to merchants or small manufacturers the "hay wagons" have nightly unloaded the groups of huddled and half frightened visitors, and until very recently the guides have been able to convince their fares that the Bowery as it isn't is.

Until Police Inspector Daly and Capt. Tierney started in to make a final cleaning up of the Bowery neighborhood—the Inspector from Fourteenth street south to the City Hall, and Capt. Tierney in his own Elizabeth street precinct—the sightseers at least had the joys of seeing fake opium joints, a few tame dance halls and a Chinese theatre. There was even a Steve Brodie's which came just about as near to being the real thing as the yarn about Steve's jump from the Brooklyn Bridge approached the truth.

More than two years ago along came the inspector and captain, and the guides knew that the minute they started their flock of fares toward an alleged opium joint the police would join the merry party also and the place be closed forthwith. In the course of time Inspector Daly's broom had left but one dance hall, which had to get a license and behave. There were no more opium joints, the dives were closed and the Chinese theatre was fumigated and turned into a mission.

Which doesn't mean, of course, that no opium now is smoked in Chinatown and its vicinity. But to-day the hay wagon crowds or the casual stroller couldn't get into an opium den even with a letter of introduction from the eminent Mr. Connors himself. Chuck threw up his hands in horror when asked a few nights ago if he couldn't start an inquirer in the general direction of a good American plan opium joint. Then Mr. Connors was gripped beyond measure at the mere suggestion that he should know even the location of an opium house. One gathered that if such information were to fall into his possession he would grab it tightly, the information, and run to Police Headquarters with the news as fast as his little legs could carry him.

"The hay wagon ruse," grinned Chuck the other night, "used to be as safe with me as if they was in a police station, but you couldn't make 'em believe it. Take it from me, everybody down here is more scared about starting anything than the uptown crowd is, because down here they know that the minute anything is pulled off it starts a rumble and the coppers fly out of heaven."

"But it was great to see 'em when the megaphone speller led a herd of 'em down the hay wagon and pointed out me along with the other great sights."

"Now, Hector, put your money in your

inside vest pocket, one of the just married women would whisper to her new nosegay provider.

"The brides at the same time would worry the engagement sparklers off their fingers and throw the keys away. But now you haven't a chance to be even an innocent bystander down here. The biggest boob we got don't dare nowadays to start a fight in a restaurant or try to tear off anything else because the gang knows that every Chin's got sense enough by this time to make one jump to the balcony of his shop sney joint and blow a police whistle."

"But when the haywagons came here down into their kicks went the coin before they'd start in to expect to see a lot of murders and stuff like they'd been told of back home on the pastures we have here in Chinatown and the Bowery every few minutes. And the Chinks and the gangs lookin' on knowin' all the time that a gink might just as well go into Headquarters and punch the Commish in the lamp as start anything along the haywagon tracks."

The Chucks and the guides will tell you that the more unsophisticated the girl from the small town or the country is the more wildly anxious is she to see white women and Chinamen smoking opium together. That's why Blond Lulu and Georgie Yee and their property opium pipe in a room at 13 Doyers street were the stars of the haywagon circuit until one night four months ago Capt. Tierney stopped, looked and listened.

The fake opium joint, however, at least was unique in the haywagon attractions

the haywagons every night in the year and collected much coin until the heartless police closed his place.

A few weeks of the third grade opium and Lulu and Georgie would evidently be taking the count. Maybe they "awoke" the minute the last high heeled shoe of the haywagons had left the fetid little room, but the haywagons went away happy in the thought that they had seen the depths of vice. Also any qualms of conscience that the visitors might have had were lessened a bit by the lecture delivered by the megaphone man while Georgie and Lulu smoked the opium.

ship." An old Chinaman with a complexion like an English combination mutton chop, split and have it well done, Emil, received the party gladly. For each haywagoner that entered the old Chinaman received 5 cents from the guide. Also the joss house combines worship with finance by lining the room with near jade bracelets, sticks of punk and cheap Oriental knickknacks made in the furthest East New York, which may be obtained for a consideration.

The guide explained learnedly the religion of the Chinese, and the old Chinaman gathered in nickels and dimes. And

A visit to the Chinese Freemason headquarters and to the Chinese Theatre usually ended the Oriental part of the evening, although the guide did pause occasionally to point out the bulletin boards in Doyers street plastered with red paper on which was the Chinatown news of the day. And sometimes there was an impressive pause in Pell or Mott or Doyers street, where the guide would say impressively:

"That manhole marks the spot where a few days ago Wu Squeezicks was shot to death in one of the terrible tong wars, which are the curse of this degraded

Even Chinatown Unable Longer to Provide Attractions, Real or Faked, For the Visitor From Out of Town

place up the Bowery, north of Heister street, has been a sad affair. There was a time when the Bowery backrooms and dives could go in for dancing without taking out a dance hall license. Since last September, however, a license is required, and therefore this season the haywagons could not see at Brodie's old place even the hired dancers who were paid by the sightseeing companies to go through something that looked remotely like the real thing of the dance halls of a decade or more years ago.

"And after that," all these Hectors and Dolites and the rest of this gang that got into town with milk on their shoes would ride uptown to a swell hotel and find that while they were down in Chinatown and the Bowery somebody had busted into their hotel and swiped their silver hairbrushes while they were down looking over us respectable folks."

The present state of affairs has saddened even the Chinese. All or almost all of the Chinese gamblers have pulled up stakes and have moved away, hundreds of them to Paterson and Newark. "Tong shooting, too shooting and gang shooting," as one of the policemen put it, had much to do with this. There was a time when from 1,200 to 2,000 Chinamen came into Chinatown to spend Saturday and Sunday buying provisions and gambling, but not during the past months.

The general trekking to Jersey towns includes not only the gamblers but the small merchants as well. While the reporter was talking to a detective one night recently the detective pointed down Pell street, where two Chinamen were

white met in a back room of a Bowery saloon put it:

"He's a good skipper. He don't bulldoze you—just goes at you nice. 'You do what I say and be nice and I'll stick,' he says. And he does."

The much maligned Bowery was a pretty safe place to be even when Inspector Daly took hold of it almost three years ago. Nevertheless the inspector found things to do. Commissioner Waldo, who takes a special interest in police work in the Bowery and often personally looks over things in Chinatown, cut out Inspector Daly's work for him. The inspector got at his job in a way that left the Bowery harmless—even safer than some other neighborhoods that one could mention.

Inspector Daly found interesting places such as the "cripple factory" down where Park row begins to take on a Bowery look. The inspector learned that here the Bowery flopper or the crook, too tired to do harder work than panhandle, could be taken in hand by an expert and lose a leg or an arm without actually losing it, and then sent out to beg on the strength of his "deformity." The inspector closed up the plant for manufacturing alleged blind and halt and lame men.

The high jinks at the Chatham Club were stopped. The dive running under the name of Steve Brodie's was closed. So were Jack Sirocco's, and Big Jack's, and dives at 100, 114 and 116 Bowery. Nigger Mike's was transformed from a dive to a sedate Chinese grocery and knick-knack shop. From twelve to fifteen other dives went by the board along the Bowery and Park row. At 8 Doyers street the best of the eighteenth runs to-day is a piano and a lone singer. But at that address there was a time when—

Jimmie Kelly, as an Italian named D. Salvato calls himself, has a licensed dance hall. But now it's just a quiet little, nice little dance hall compared with the good old days. Nobody last night cut up high jinks around Jimmie Kelly's, not by a long shot. Kelly and his friends know too well how hard it is to-day to get a dance hall license and how easily one is lost these days.

The only trouble caused lately in which a dance hall figured was indirectly due to Jimmie Kelly's place. But can a respectable gentleman like Kelly be blamed if while he is walking along a quiet East Side street some other gentleman, merely because of jealousy owing to the fact that Kelly has a license, up and aims and tries to separate him from his breath with a .44 caliber?

Chuck himself proudly called the reporter's attention to the string of precarious banks and other financial institutions along the Bowery. The Thalia Theatre property is on the market, and very likely soon will give way to a loft or model tenement building. Across the street the great plaza and approaches to the new Manhattan Bridge now under way will give to what once was an undesirable part of the lower Bowery an almost parklike appearance. One walking north on the Bowery scarcely has reached Grand street when he begins to see to the north towering loft-buildings of modern construction and except for the larger crowds in the street the Bowery might be the older part of Sixth avenue save except that the Bowery is wider and perhaps is kept cleaner.

They may have said such things and done such things on the Bowery in the days when the words to that effect were written by the song writer, but to-day about the only thing they do to-day is to sell derby hats, hardware, clothing, shoes and less alcohol than is sold in Broadway. The Bowery isn't the spick and span, morally and physically, place the police and the merchants would like to see it even to-day, but it is as far from being the Bowery of old or the Bowery that Hector and his Nanticoke bride think it is as the late Steve Brodie was from being a bridge jumper.



in that it had this in its favor or disfavor: Lulu and Georgie smoked real opium.

"Third grade opium," the police call the kind that Georgie "cooked" for himself and Lulu, which is opium weakened out to about the nth power.

Georgie Yee added an artistic touch to these scenes even up to the early part of the past autumn. As he cooked the pills for himself and Lulu he would sing crazily and hop around with a show of animation that the cyclotomic Eva Tanguy might well have studied. These stunts, the dancing and the crazy singing of "Sweet Sixteen" and "Allee Samee Jimmie Doyle" proved conclusively to the visitors that opium had turned Georgie's brain. He was just as crazy, by the way, as an experienced fox. But he fooled

"This exhibition cannot really be called immoral," droned the guide mechanically. "These poor people are slaves to the opium habit and whether you came here or not to see them they would have spent this night smoking opium just as you see them doing it now. If we could we should all like to reform these poor victims of a vile habit, but they are gone beyond recall. Let us now walk to the Chinese restaurant and get an insight into the domestic life of these curious children of the Orient."

The guide had started things by unloading his haywagons at Mott street and the Bowery. First he led the flock to the joss house at 16 Mott street, where the haywagons chattered up three flights of dark steps to see the Chinamen "wor-

then there was the trip to the Chinese restaurant, say, where the guide paid 10 cents a head for his string of fares and where each was served with a dab of chop suey. The fare for the trip was \$2, which after deducting the 5 cents admission to the joss house and the 10 cents at the restaurant left the sightseeing company \$1.55 a head for the trip. And in the fat years so profitable was the business that wagons not only started late at night from both the north and south corners of Forty-second street and Broadway but from the Broadway and the Fifth avenue sides of the Flatiron Building as well. In those days Georgie and Lulu had to work overtime smoking opium. Life to them was just one stupefaction after another.

region," and under the dark awning across the street the guide would gaze steadily at the plain clothes man standing there and the detective would gaze back and neither would bat an eye.

Sometimes the merriment extended to a visit also to the Mandarin restaurant in Doyers street, where the haywagons were seated along the wall and fed a glass of beer. And in the fat days also was a choice of two more opium joints, one at 12 Pell street and the other at 16 Mott street. But not now.

"We will now go to Steve Brodie's, a tough, very tough, dive," the speller would inform his haywagons as he loaded them on the sightseeing wagon again out on the Bowery.

During recent years Steve Brodie's moving at midnight. For obvious reasons the Chinese householder doesn't hire a big moving van. A pushcart

suffices. The discontinuance of the sightseeing wagons was the knockout blow so far as the small merchants of Chinatown are concerned. The wholesale merchants, however, do not worry, because these more lordly businesses men continue to ship their goods to Chinamen throughout the country, as they always have been doing.

It may be noted that in Chinatown to-night you may spend hours there and not see as much disorder as you might on Broadway and the cross streets uptown. And Chinatown behaves for Capt. Tierney in many ways, because, as one of the

NEW SWINDLING SCHEMES EVOLVED BY THE ARSENE LUPINS IN REAL LIFE

To incurable optimists the fact that the head of the French detective bureau could reveal to the newspapers about half a dozen new swindling schemes which originated in the fertile brains of French Arsene Lupins in the course of the year 1911 may be considered an encouraging sign of progress. It might tend to show that a little ingenuity is becoming necessary nowadays in order to make fools part with their cash.

The French detective expressed to the reporters a hope that the publicity given for these clever schemes would spoil them for further use. It may be, however, that it will only induce more commonplace and less imaginative Arsene Lupins to add them to their repertoire.

Original and plausible was the forged bank note scheme. The following letter was sent to old people having savings in bank, to cashiers able to dispose for a few hours or a few days of important sums in cash and to others whose confidence could be easily won:

My DEAR SIR: Being an experienced engraver, I am in a position to duplicate so perfectly the notes of the Bank of France that the most painstaking examination under the microscope would fail to reveal the difference between the genuine bills and those issued from my press. I could not very well put them into circulation myself without awakening suspicion. I have decided therefore to select a few of persons at a discount of 50 per cent, from their face value.

To enable you to realize the degree of perfection of which my duplicating process is capable I am enclosing you a sample bill of the value of fifty francs.

No name, no address was given. The gudgeon to whom this anonymous communication was addressed presented the supposed forged bill at the cashier's window of his bank.

"This bill looks funny to me; do you suppose it's all right?" he asks. And the most experienced bank cashier would, after examining the bill carefully, crumpling the paper between his fingers, and testing the fibre, answer invariably:

"Why, this is as good as gold."

To a department store or to a butcher shop the gudgeon repaired just to try,

and addressed to the cashier the stereotyped question:

"This bill looks queer to me; do you think it's all right?"

To which the cashier would give the ever surprising answer: "It is as good as gold."

A fortnight or a month later another letter:

My DEAR SIR: You must be satisfied by this time that our imitations of the Bank of France bills can be presented anywhere without fear of detection. In order to convince you that not only our fifty franc bills but our bills of larger denominations can pass muster at any bank, we are enclosing you one 100 franc bill.

Again, no name, no address.

To several banks and stores the easy mark made a second pilgrimage, always expecting to have some gray haired expert throw the bill back at him with an uncompromising reflection upon the forger's ability.

The 100 franc bill was accepted in payment and never heard of again.

A month later, a third letter:

My DEAR SIR: We hope that after the proofs of confidence and honesty we have given you, you will be willing to enter into commercial relations with us upon the terms specified in our first communication. We do not make any charge for the samples we submitted to your approval and whose numbers we have kept in order to protect ourselves against any possible interference of the police. We will expect you, however, to mail to A. J. General Delivery a sum in cash to suit your convenience. In return for which we will mail you within twenty-four hours the double amount in our own bank bills.

The mark did it and never peeped.

One of the easy marks unfortunately was a bank cashier. He "borrowed" \$50,000 for twenty-four hours. When he failed to receive the expected \$100,000 the police took him in charge and the whole secret leaked out. As may have been guessed the "forged" sample bills used as bait were perfectly genuine.

Curiously enough, the reports of this swindle, when published in the press, prompted a poor clerk to try a similar scheme in the furtherance of his own purposes.

An engraver by profession and endowed

with very little of this world's goods, he secured a brand new 50 franc bill and called on one of the officers of the Bank of France.

"See this bill?" he said. "I made it. Perfect, isn't it? Now, my dear sir, here is my proposition. I am very poor and I have several children to support. In order to make a living for my family and myself I will keep on forging fifty franc bills. They are such perfect imitations of yours that no expert would declare under oath that they were forgeries; and therefore how could you prosecute me?"

"On the other hand, give me a permanent position in your engraving department and I swear I will never attempt to forge another bill."

The financier judged that diplomacy might accomplish better results than rash measures. He gave the engraver employment and notified the secret police. The sleuths were absolutely baffled in their hunt for the engraving and printing plant mentioned by the self-styled forger. A circular sent to all the banks failed to bring a single duplicate of the spurious fifty franc bill which, as the schemer stated, was declared genuine by every expert, for it was genuine.

The harmless impostor, who didn't prove to be a very skilled engraver, was dismissed after a rather severe lecture and the incident was closed.

Just as the French Sherlock Holmes abandoned his wild goose chase for evidence against unfaithful servants and watchmen. The exchange was watched very closely, with excellent results. The subscribers have all had new locks put on their doors since then.

The telegraph inspector had a short but brilliant and rather pleasant career. He would visit little rural stations, a list of which had been drawn up by travelling accomplices and which were in charge of young women recently appointed.

A distinguished looking man of fifty or so would come into the office with a good deal of assurance, introduce himself as the departmental inspector and invite the girl to show him her books and files.

He would check up her accounts, suggest some minor improvements and in a fatherly manner question her as to her

success of the enterprise which kept the gang back of it free from all suspicion.

If in the course of a year two or three hundred out of the 100,000 subscribers, and those few hundred located in different cities, towns and villages, had their homes entered by clever thieves who never broke any door or window and never damaged the furniture by the ungentlemanly use of jimmy or chisel, why should any one have suspected the exchange of having anything to do with it?

The blame for such robberies without effraction were generally laid to a member of the family or of the household. Servants and watchmen were discharged; husbands lost in the eyes of their wives their reputation for veracity and trustworthiness, and that was all. Such robberies while mysterious were never very sensational, as the neighbors and the police always entertained doubts as to whether a real robbery had taken place, until—

Once a careless burglar had to beat a hasty retreat, leaving in a dresser lock the key with which he had just opened it. That piece of evidence when compared with a duplicate key the exchange had supplied to the subscriber after he had mislaid his key ring showed a strange likeness to it in the quality of metal used and in the workmanship.

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He would check up her accounts, suggest some minor improvements and in a fatherly manner question her as to her

previous experience, making sure in a casual way as to whether she could read telegrams in Morse alphabet by ear only.

Whenever he received a negative answer he proceeded to test the apparatus, then departed with a courteous ad dignified greeting.

At the other end of the line the dignified inspector's pal hastened to cash the telegraphic money order which had been delivered at his hotel.

For use in the summer season was the wardrobe scheme which is worked as follows: A couple of days after well to do people have cleaned their apartment and left for the country, a delivery wagon stops in front of the house and two or three men in professional mover's getup inform the janitor that they are bringing Mr. B's wardrobe.

"Mr. B," the janitor remarks, "left for the country the day before yesterday."

"I know. There was a strike on at our factory and they couldn't get the varnish dry in time. I guess we can take it right up to the flat. It's paid for, anyhow."

"Mr. B never told me about it."

"I can't help that. We have instructions from him to put it in the hall between the door and the bedroom."

And up the stairs or the elevator the big heavy oak wardrobe would go and be put in place according to Mr. B's formal instructions. The movers tried to insert the key into the wardrobe lock. It wouldn't fit.

"We'll send over the right key the first thing to-morrow morning."

The next day, early in the morning, the same delivery wagon stopped at the door, and the movers with a sheepish grin informed the janitor that the ship-ping clerk had made an awful mistake. They had delivered to Mr. B's formal instructions. The movers tried to insert the key into the wardrobe lock. It wouldn't fit.

The tenants for whatever of their possessions had been removed within the large oak affair.

For the large oak affair originally contained a man, a lunch basket and a tool chest. When it was removed the following morning it contained besides the man the tool chest and the now empty lunch box, all the silver, valuables and trinkets left by the tenants in the flat.

Another form of robbery especially indicated for the summer months was practised last year by a genius called Thomas.

Many old churches of the interior of France contain priceless works of art, which have accumulated in the course of sometimes ten centuries.

Thomas drove to the church he had made up his mind to rob in a huge touring car, accompanied by several well dressed young men and women. The old beadle, fascinated by a royal tip, described all the treasures which were the pride of the parish. Then the women would insist on climbing up the steeple's stairway to take a snapshot of the surrounding country.

The following Sunday morning it would be discovered that the tabernacle and the sacristy had been cleaned out of every object of worship in gold and silver. In several cases masterpieces of painting had been removed and replaced by worthless copies.

There was always a window forced open just back of the altar. It was very evident that the robber had made his escape that way and that there never was any connection between the robbery and the visit of the elegant, generous and good natured motorists in the big touring car.

The detective bureau succeeded, however, in demonstrating beyond doubt the existence of that connection, which at first wasn't clearly apparent.

Thomas was arrested and then it was proved that he really was the head of an international syndicate with branches in various European capitals.

A fast automobile was also a handy accessory in the case of a jeweller's clerk who spent several anxious hours in a padded cell.

Her son, she said, with a very sad expression on her face, was suffering from a mental delusion and because the delusion whenever any one doubted his genuine statements. He thought himself pursued by people who were trying to take away from him a diamond necklace. Would the doctor examine her son this afternoon, keeping within call one or two strong nurses in case of an emergency?

A time was set for the examination of the poor young man and the lady ordered the doctor to come to her jeweller's. There she revealed her alleged identity.

"I am Mrs. A. Dr. A's wife," she said, "and before deciding whether I am to chase the diamond necklace for my daughter I wish to have the doctor's approval. Can you send one of your salesmen to show the diamonds to my husband? I could take him along now in the car."

One of the salesmen was instructed to accompany the lady.

After entering the doctor's waiting room the lady simply asked the salesman to take a chair and to let her have the diamonds. She knocked at the door of the doctor's office and was admitted. A few minutes later she invited the salesman to step into the office and to make arrangements with the doctor about the settlement of the bill.

She then slipped out of the house and drove off as fast as the automobile could take her without courting arrest for violating the speed laws.

In the meantime the salesman, still puzzled, then indignant, finally aroused to actual violence, was overpowered, put in a straitjacket, given a strong dose of opiate and locked up in a padded cell.

This romantic story would be made more thrilling yet if it could be added that the unfortunate salesman was still pining away in that cell. Unfortunately or fortunately, his employers delivered him a few hours afterward.

It cannot be denied that the modern swindler in France is acquiring a decided talent for the dramatic, while ordinary burglars seem to be resorting more and more to humane methods and avoiding the murderous weapons or tools of the previous generation. In these days of humane progress the worst physical consequences from an actual encounter with a burglar, according to a French writer, seem to be a protracted nap induced by some anesthetic. "We have no doubt," he adds, "that in some time from now up to date and scientific burglars will follow the example of modern surgeons and have a specialist administer the gas while they will operate on the furniture."